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THE PUNISHER 2099
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HIS FAMILY WAS MURDERED BY A PSYCHOPATH IN AN AGE WHERE JUSTICE CAN BE BOUGHT AND NO ONE BELIEVES IN OLD-FASHIONED PUNISHMENT ANYMORE... NO ONE EXCEPT JAKE GALLOWS... A WEAPONS SPECIALIST IN THE PUBLIC EYE POLICE FORCE BY DAY, AT NIGHT HE IS INCORRUPTIBLE JUSTICE.
STAN LEE PRESENTS:
THE PUNISHER 2099
GHOST IN THE MACHINE!
WHO ARE YOU? WHAT'S YOUR INTEREST IN JAKE GALLOWS'S BANK ACCOUNT?
NOTHING TO SAY, HUH? AH, WELL-- I'LL JUST HAVE TO BEAT IT OUT OF YOU, PUNK!
TRY IT, PUNISHER... I'LL BEAT YOU RIGHT BACK AND FIND OUT WHY YOU'RE SO INTERESTED IN GALLOWS!
PAT MILLS & TONY SKINNER WRITERS
SIMON COLEBY PENCILS
KEITH WILLIAMS INKS
PHIL FELIX LETTERS
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NO WAY I'M LETTING THE PUNISHER KNOW JAKE GALLOWS WAS MY DAD...
...WHEN HE COULD BE BOTHERED TO SPEND TIME WITH ME, THAT IS!
YOU HAVEN'T ANSWERED MY QUESTION, BOY!
BECAUSE I'M WEARING MATT'S NEW FACE SCRAMBLER AND VOICE SYNTHESIZER, THIS PUNK DOESN'T KNOW IT'S MY MONEY HE WAS AFTER.
THAT THE PUNISHER IS JAKE GALLOWS.
I'M JUST AFTER GALLOWS'S MONEY, PUNISHER! AND I'M WALKING OUT OF HERE WITH IT!
GET IN MY WAY AND I'LL BLOW YOU TO ATOMIC DUST!
YAAAAHH!

ONE MORE ZAP LIKE THAT AND YOU'LL START LOSING FINGERS!
BY THE WAY.. MY NAME'S NOT PUNK... IT'S HOT-WIRE! THE ENERGY BEAM TELLS YOU WHY!
UUUGH...! KEEP IT UP, KID.. I KNOW WHERE YOUR ENERGY COMES FROM... IT'S HOW YOU FLY THE WIRES!
HE'S RIGHT -- THIS ENERGY COMES FROM MY BODY.. "T.C." -- TOTAL CONVERSION. I'M ABLE TO CONVERT MATTER DIRECTLY INTO ENERGY.
TROUBLE IS... IT'S MY MATTER. GONNA HAVE TO FINISH HIM OFF WITH MY HANDS-
...AND BECAUSE I'VE GOT ALLOTROPIC CONTROL OVER THEM... ABLE TO CHANGE MY PHYSICAL STATE COMPLETELY... I CAN PENETRATE HIS FLESH...
WHUUH...?

...GRASP HIS HEART... AND SQUEEZE!
UUUUGHH!
HAVING A MASSIVE CORONARY... GOT ONLY SECONDS TO LIVE.
BUT AT LEAST I CAN TAKE HIM WITH ME... MY SUIT'S ENERGY ACCUMULATORS HAVE ABSORBED HIS ENERGY BLAST...
I CAN GIVE IT TO HIM RIGHT BACK THROUGH MY CYBORG HAND.
AAAGGHH! HOW...?
TOUGHER THAN YOU THOUGHT, EH, SON?

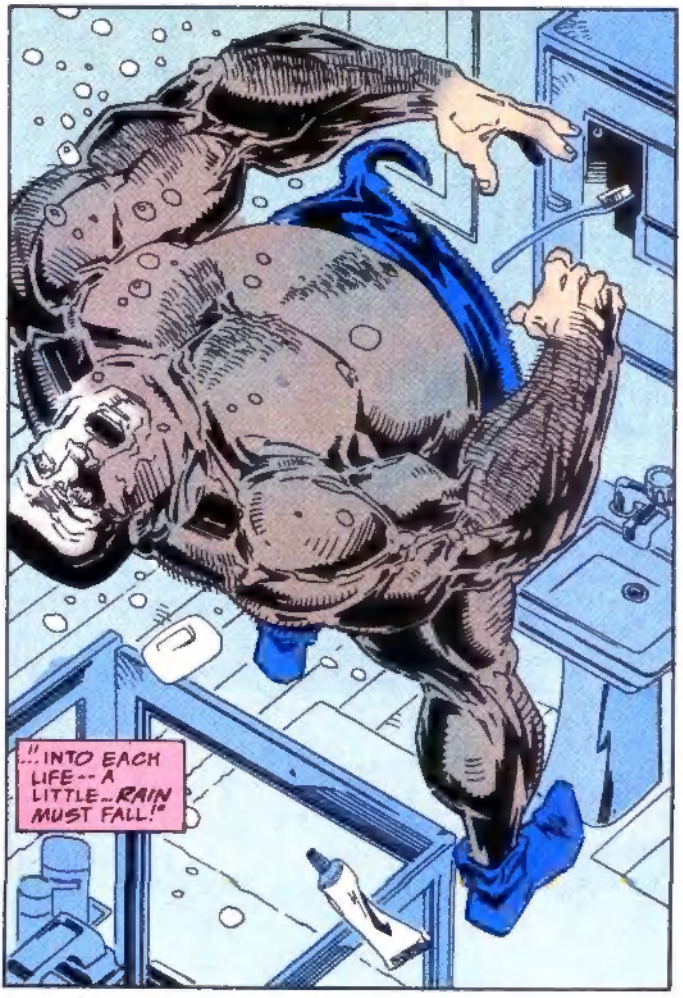
NOW I'M GONNA WHIP YOUR BUTT!
NOW I'M GONNA WHIP YOUR BUTT!
WHY AM I FLINCHING...? SOMETHING ABOUT HIS VOICE -- TERRIFYING ME.
I FEEL LIKE I'M A KID AGAIN!
YOU THIEVING LITTLE SCUM! NOW I'M GONNA TEACH YOU A LESSON YOU'LL NEVER FORGET!
CAN'T USE UP ANY MORE ENERGY... I'VE GOT JUST ENOUGH TO GET OUT OF HERE...!

BUT I'VE A FEW MOVES THE PUNISHER WON'T KNOW.
HOW THE.. NNNFF!
HOW DID HE KNOW TO DO THAT? IT'S MY OWN PRIVATE MOVE!
THE ONLY PERSON I EVER TAUGHT THAT MOVE WAS..NO! IT'S NOT POSSIBLE--MY SON IS DEAD!
HOW DID YOU LIKE THEM APPLES? THIS NEXT MOVE IS A REAL PEACH!
IT'S CALLED "PUNISHER GETS A BROKEN NECK!"

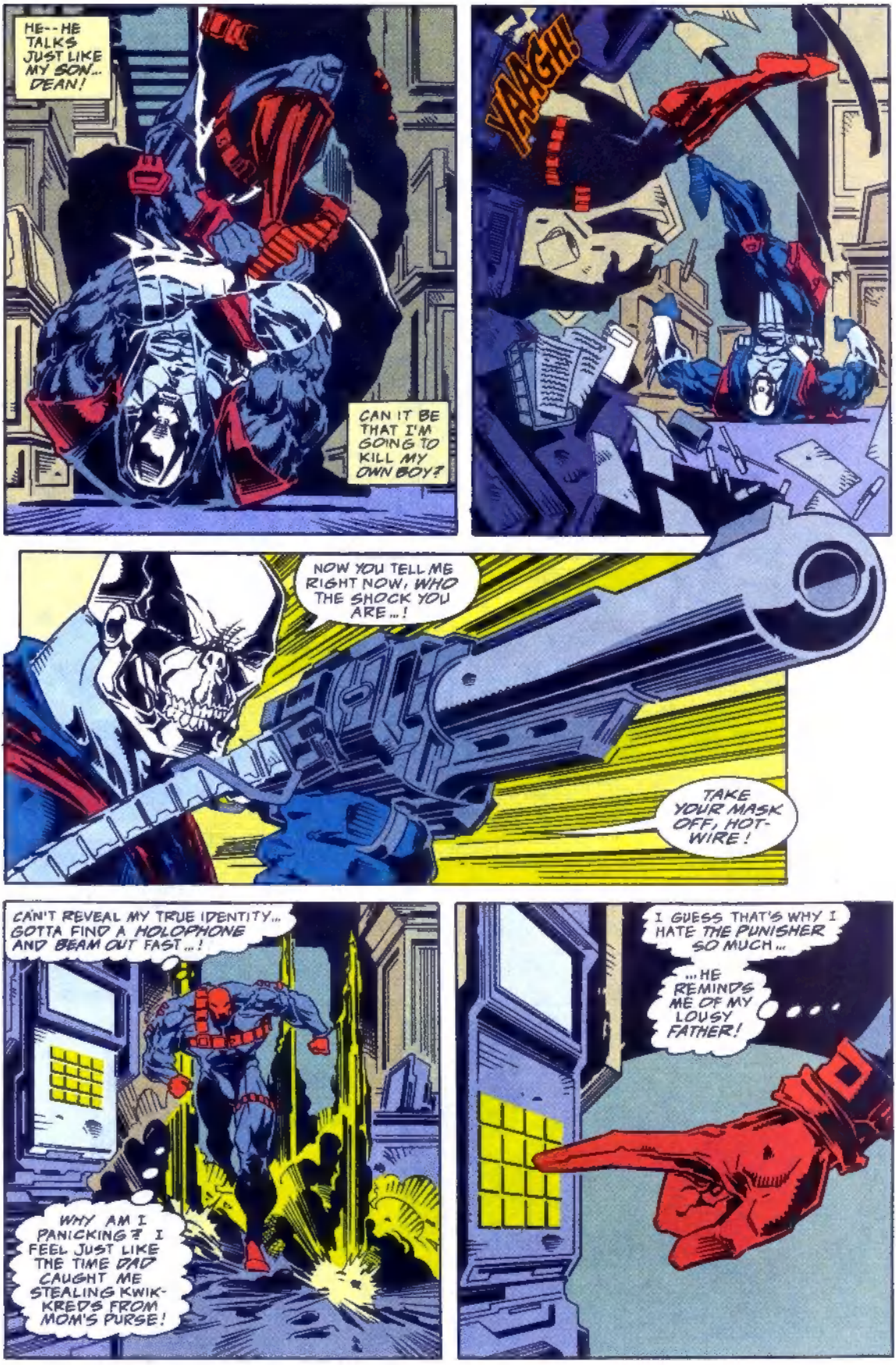
LOVECRAFT ST
MORGUE PLUS
POE LN

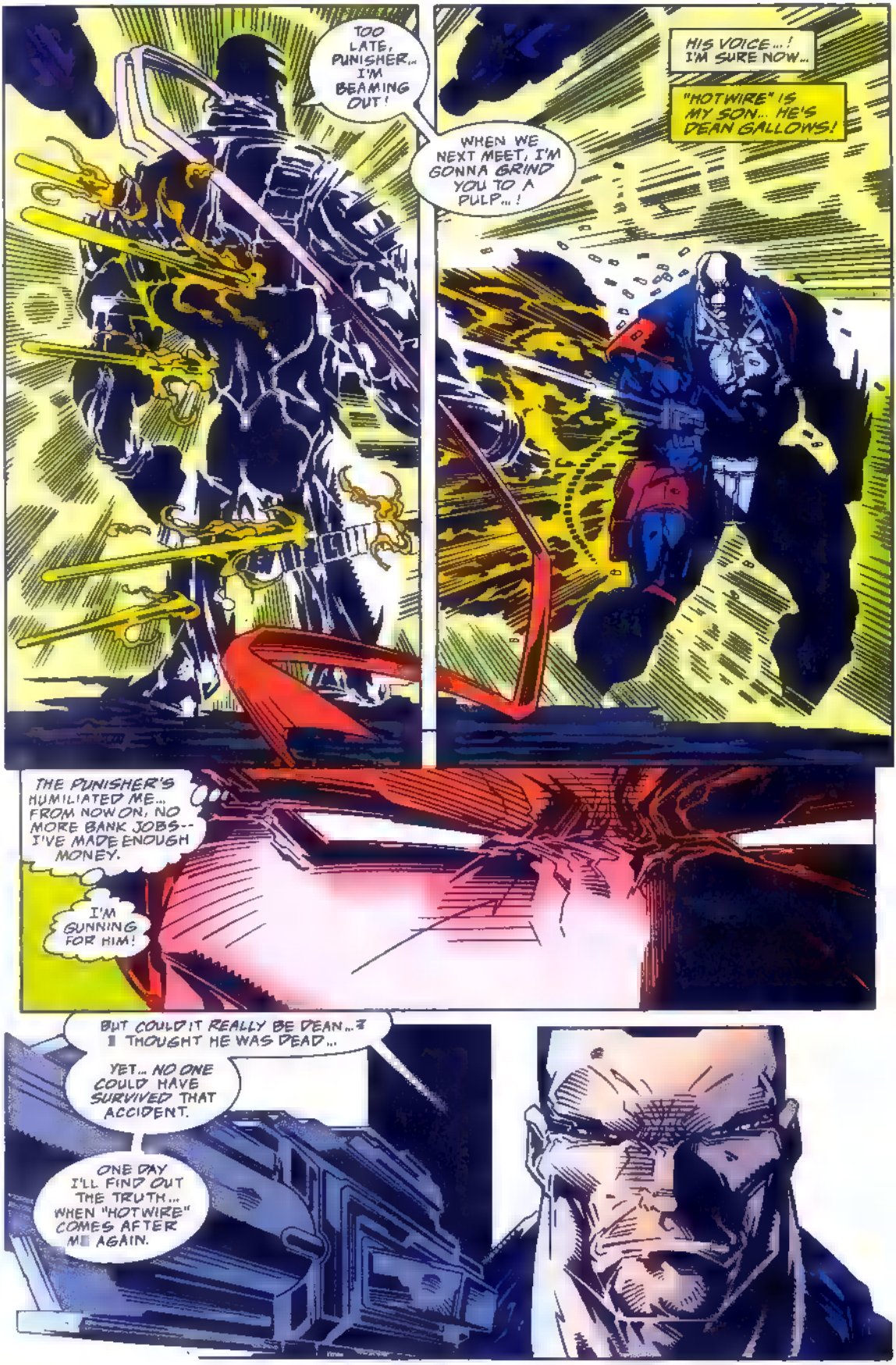
IN THIS GREY AND LIFELESS WORLD, FIXED IN ITS RIGID PREDICTABILITY, IT IS SOMETIMES NECESSARY TO THROW A RANDOM WRENCH IN THE WORKS...

"PEOPLE EKE OUT THEIR OVER-INSURED LIVES... TRYING TO COCOON THEMSELVES FROM THE REALITY OF A CHAOTIC COSMOS...
"...THE NOVEL... THE BIZARRE... THE IMPOSSIBLY UN-LIKELY...
BATHROOM
"...HOWEVER...


"...INTO EACH LIFE -- A LITTLE... RAIN MUST FALL!"

"YES... THINGS CAN FALL UPON THEM FROM... OUT OF THE BLUE...
HONEY! IS THAT A JET OR WHAT...?
LOOKS LIKE A SHOOTING STAR... A METEORITE!
"...HOWEVER VAINLY THEY ATTEMPT TO AVOID THE... SLINGS AND ARROWS OF OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE...
THEY USUALLY BURN UP IN THE ATMOSPHERE... WONDER IF WE'LL SEE THIS ONE HIT THE GROUND...?
THAT'LL BE SOMETHING TO TELL OUR KIDS.
"...BUT WHAT IMMORTAL HAND OR EYE HAS CAUSED THIS FATEFUL...
ER--HONEY! IT SEEMS TO BE COMING THIS WAY...
YOU'RE RIGHT! RUN!
BOOOMM!
"...SYNCHRONICITY!
"WHY MINE, OF COURSE."

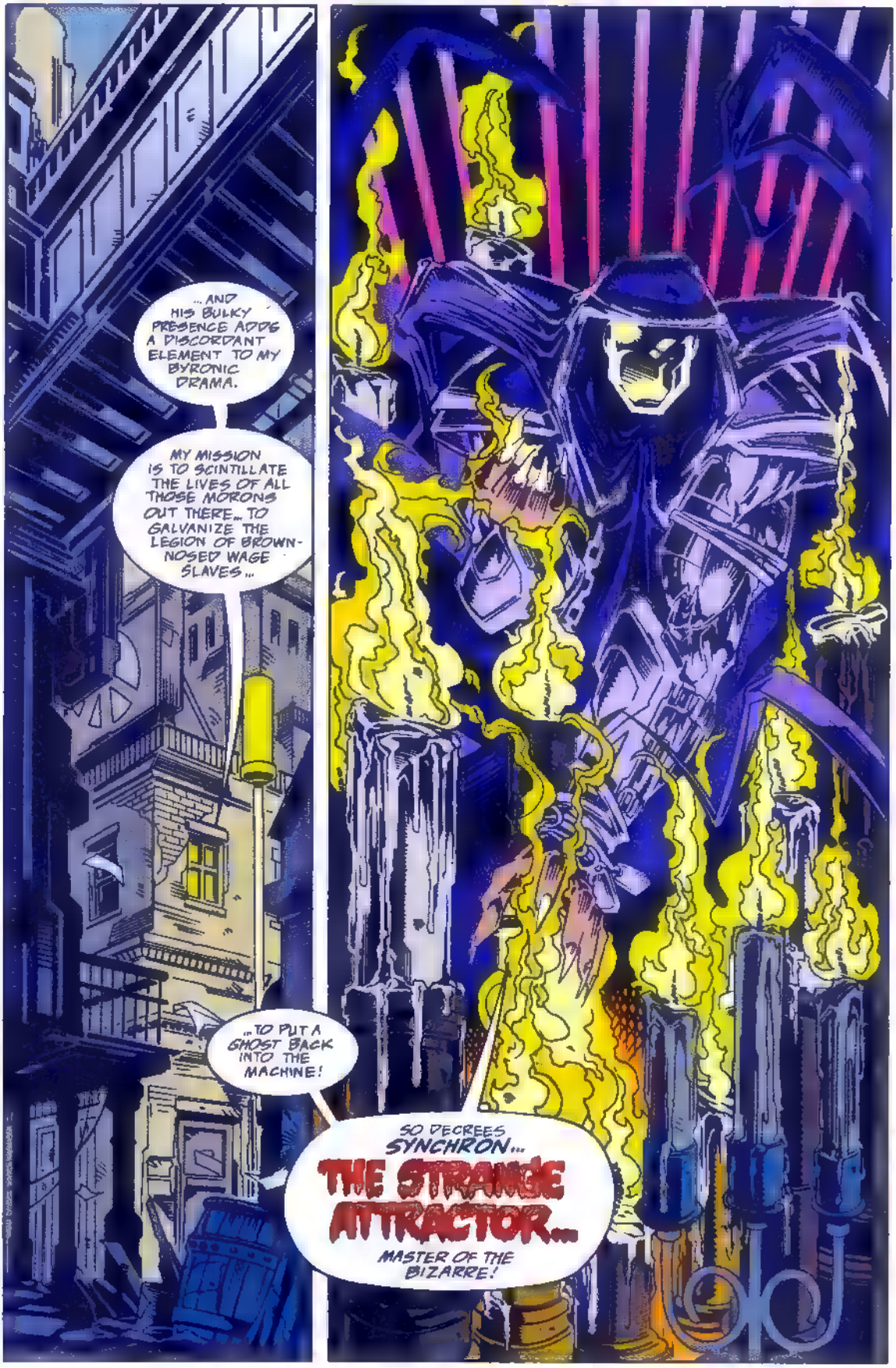

HE--HE TALKS JUST LIKE MY SON... DEAN!
CAN IT BE THAT I'M GOING TO KILL MY OWN BOY?
YAAGH!
NOW YOU TELL ME RIGHT NOW, WHO THE SHOCK YOU ARE...!
TAKE YOUR MASK OFF, HOT-WIRE!
CAN'T REVEAL MY TRUE IDENTITY... GOTTA FIND A HOLOPHONE AND BEAM OUT FAST...!
WHY AM I PANICKING? I FEEL JUST LIKE THE TIME DAD CAUGHT ME STEALING KWIK-KREDS FROM MOM'S PURSE!
I GUESS THAT'S WHY I HATE THE PUNISHER SO MUCH...
...HE REMINDS ME OF MY LOUSY FATHER!
...


TOO LATE, PUNISHER... I'M BEAMING OUT!
WHEN WE NEXT MEET, I'M GONNA GRIND YOU TO A PULP...!
HIS VOICE...! I'M SURE NOW...
"HOTWIRE" IS MY SON... HE'S DEAN GALLOWS!
THE PUNISHER'S HUMILIATED ME... FROM NOW ON, NO MORE BANK JOBS-- I'VE MADE ENOUGH MONEY.
I'M GUNNING FOR HIM!
BUT COULD IT REALLY BE DEAN...? I THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD...
YET... NO ONE COULD HAVE SURVIVED THAT ACCIDENT.
ONE DAY I'LL FIND OUT THE TRUTH... WHEN "HOTWIRE" COMES AFTER ME AGAIN.

AIN'T LIFE STRANGE, JAKE?
THE CHANCES OF A GUY'S BATHROOM FILLING WITH WATER AND DROWNING HIM MUST ■ A MILLION TO ONE!
COME ON, CHIEF--DO YOU REALLY BUY THE COINCIDENCE THAT THE TAPS JAMMED... THE PLUG JAMMED... AND THE DOOR JAMMED..?!
NO. DON'T HAVE TO. THAT'S WHAT PATHOLOGY SAID HAPPENED... SO THAT'S MY JOB DONE.
EVEN THOUGH IT'S THE FIFTH DEATH IN MORGUE AVENUE IN FIVE DAYS... IN APARTMENTS ONE THROUGH FIVE?!
THAT'S TAKING COINCIDENCE TOO FAR!
LIKE THE COINCIDENCES CONNECTING MY SON AND HOTWIRE!
BBC
ACCORDING TO THE INSURERS, THESE SUDDEN BIZARRE FATALITIES ARE 'ACTS OF GOD'. IF IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ALCHASSURANCE, IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE PUBLIC EYE.
WELL, IT AIN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

THIS WHOLE AVENUE IS WEIRD... ATTACHED TO A GRADE ONE LISTED NINETEENTH CENTURY GRAVEYARD.
NO WAY THIS JUST HAPPENED... SOMEONE'S BEHIND IT.
WELL, WE DO HAVE ONE SUSPECT... I'D LIKE YOU TO GO AND QUESTION HIM RIGHT NOW...
...THE METEORITE, IT'S UP ON THE TENTH FLOOR. IT'S A BIT OF A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK, BUT GIVE IT YOUR BEST SHOT.
IS THAT IT, CHIEF? ALL WE DO IS LAUGH, RIGHT?
NO, JAKE. WE DO OUR JOBS, WHICH IS REASSURING THE PUBLIC THAT THE SKY ISN'T GOING TO FALL ON THEIR HEADS.
EVERY TIME THERE'S A DISASTER, WE SET UP AN OFFICIAL INQUIRY. THE SUBSCRIBERS THINK SOMETHING IS BEING DONE.
THAT'S WHY WE PICKED A HIGH-PROFILE COP LIKE YOU TO HEAD THE INQUIRY. JUST FOLLOW THE USUAL PROCEDURE OF ALL OFFICIAL INQUIRIES... DO NOTHING.
SORRY CHIEF. CAN'T DO THAT.
THOUGHT YOU'D SAY THAT... HERE--IF YOU REALLY INSIST ON EARNING YOUR SALARY.
WE FED THE ACCIDENTS INTO "BIG BRAIN," THE POLICE MAINFRAME. HERE'S WHAT IT CAME UP WITH ... IT'S ALL ABOUT SYNCHRONICITY AND PLANETARY CYBERNETICS... I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND A WORD OF IT.
SINCE THERE'S NO ONE TO BEAT UP OR ARREST, I'M GOING HOME!

SO! I PROVIDE THE NEW YORK POLICE WITH A CONUNDRUM TO RIVAL THE GORDIAN KNOT...
...AND WHO DO THEY SEND TO UNRAVEL IT?
A CLOD... A SO-CALLED WEAPONS SPECIALIST... A FLAT-FOOT...
...NAMED JAKE GALLOWS!
WHAT CAN HE KNOW OF THE ARTISTRY OF QUANTUM MECHANICS... CAN HE HARVEST THE NON-ENERGY OF THE SPACES BETWEEN PULSES AT THE QUANTUM LEVEL?
CAN HE DISTORT CAUSALITY GENERATING SYNCHRONISTIC FIELDS SUCH AS THE UNIVERSE HAS NEVER WITNESSED?
I THINK NOT...


...AND HIS BULKY PRESENCE ADDS A DISCORDANT ELEMENT TO MY BYRONIC DRAMA.
MY MISSION IS TO SCINTILLATE THE LIVES OF ALL THOSE MORONS OUT THERE... TO GALVANIZE THE LEGION OF BROWN-NOSED WAGE SLAVES...
...TO PUT A GHOST BACK INTO THE MACHINE!
SO DECREES SYNCHRON...
THE STRANGE ATTRACTOR...
MASTER OF THE BIZARRE!

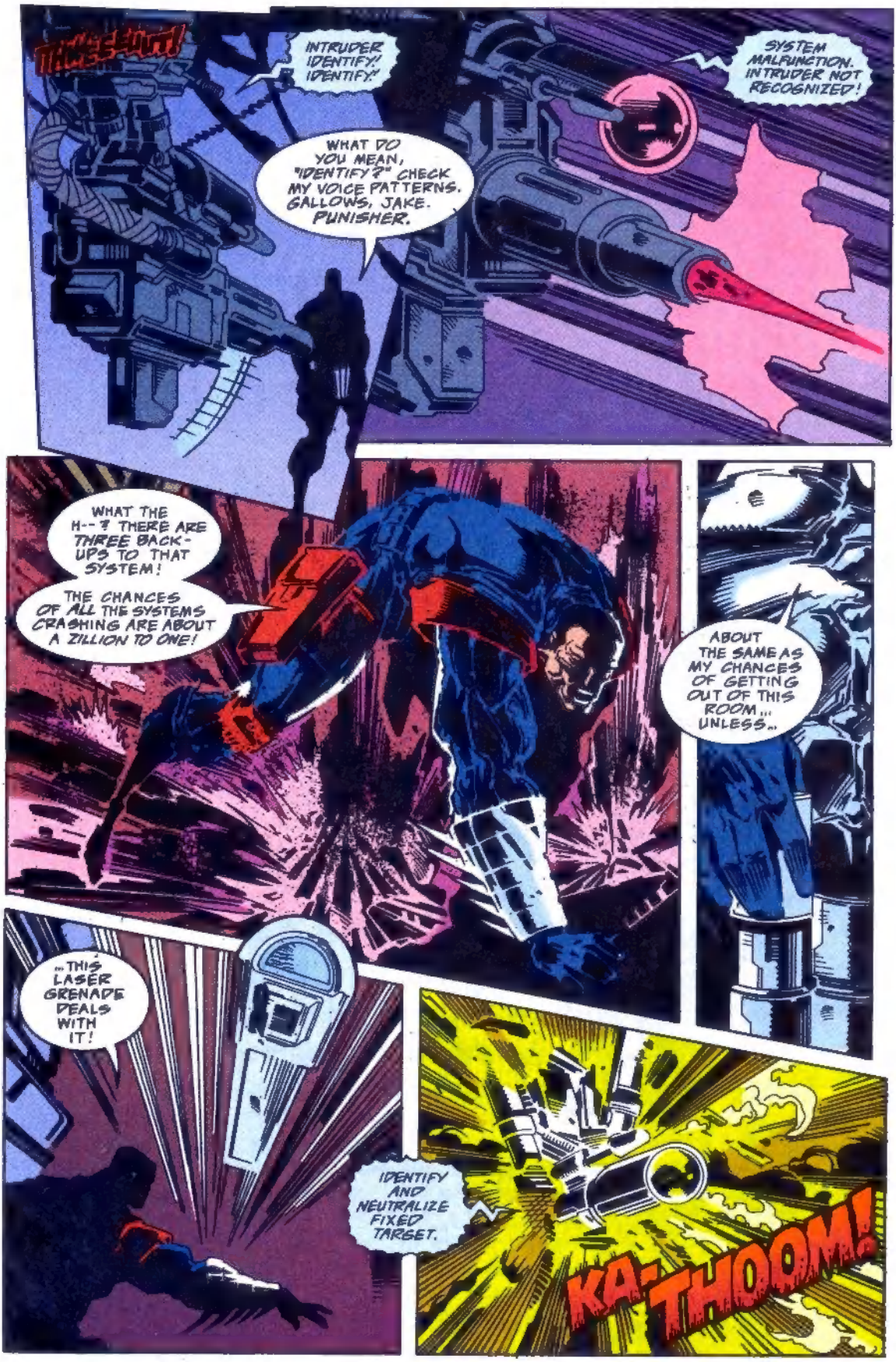
WELL, WELL... ACCORDING TO [redacted] BRAIN, SCIENCE DOES ACCEPT THAT THE NATURAL FL[redacted] OF COINCIDENCES SOMETIMES CONGEALS...
...FORMING AN EDDY OR A VORTEX...
...AND THAT'S WHAT'S GOING DOWN AT [redacted] AVENUE.
IT'S AN EXTENSION OF THE GAIA PRINCIPLE -- DISCOVERED IN THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY...
...THAT THE EARTH IS A LIVING ORGANISM THAT TWISTS PROBABILITY TO ITS ADVAN[redacted] TO SUSTAIN ITSELF.
BUT LIKE ANY SELF-REGULATING SYSTEM, PLANETARY CYBERNETICS HAVE ANOMALIES... HOWL-BACK CAN OCCUR.
FINE! SO, ACCORDING TO THE COMPUTER, EVERYTHING'S JUST FINE.
BUT I DON'T BUY IT... EVERYONE KNOWS COMPUTERS ARE STUPID...
...AND SOMEBODY SOMEWHERE HAS GOT A MACHINE AND IS DOING THIS... AND THAT MAKES IT MURDER!
AND IF JAKE GALLOWS CAN'T DEAL WITH HIM...
...THE PUNISHER CAN!

Report on the Deaths in Morgue Avenue
PUBLIC EYE
In the event of an anomalous dwell point in the synchro-matrix, the cybernetic organism would tend to produce an "antibody" to restore the synchro-flow by a process of phase cancellation.
KLIK!
NO CHOICE... GOT TO GO THROUGH THE PORTAL... AND CONFRONT...
MY ALTERNATE SELF!
It has been suggested (Bell & Curtis [illegible] that an object or person from a parallel dwell point, unaffected by the vortex, would cross dimensions and restore equilibrium [illegible] the unconscious and automatic response by the cyber-organism.
Analogous to an animal licking its wounds, Bell & Curtis [illegible] their seminal work, *The Hypothetical Dynamics of Para-Synchronicity*, termed this response [illegible] "para-clone."
But this has been refuted. Such [illegible] system would involve a physical intrusion on this reality and --to date-- [illegible] such phenomena has been observed.

Also, a living organism passing from one parallel world to another would decay and die as the transition is affected.
EEEHHH! MUST IGNORE THE PAIN... MY WORK COMES FIRST!
The so-called Para-Clone would be incapable of sustaining its existence in another dimension.
I HAVE SUCCEEDED... I HAVE PASSED THROUGH THE PORTAL INTO THIS PARALLEL EARTH...
...TO FIND MY MEDDLESOME COUNTERPART AND DESTROY HIM!
SO DECREES SYNCHRON²...
...THE SYNNER!

THE INSURANCE COMPANY CALLS MY DEEDS AN ACT OF GOD.
I LIKE THAT... IT BESTOWS UPON ME SOMETHING OF THE DIVINE...
...AS OFFICER GALLOWS WILL DISCOVER.
Hmmm... STORM'S GATHERING... WEATHER CONTROL MUST HAVE BROKEN DOWN...
HE IS MARKED... HE ■ NOW AN ATTRACTOR... I CAN LEAVE HIS UNDOING TO THE FORCES OF HAPPENSTANCE AND COINCIDENCE.
"NOTHING SUITS MY PURPOSE BETTER THAN TO INFLICT UPON HIM THE FULL MAJESTY OF SYNCHRONICITY!"

TZZZAKK!
ENERGY ACCUMULATORS IN MY SUIT ABSORBED IT... JUST!
BUT LIGHTNING?!
OKAY, THOR... I GET THE HINT...
...SO THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS TO LAPSED THORITES!
BETTER CHECK THAT THE LIGHTNING HASN'T AFFECTED ANYTHING ELSE.
RUN A HOUSE SYSTEM DIAGNOSTIC.


THWEEEEE!!!
INTRUDER IDENTIFY! IDENTIFY!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "IDENTIFY?" CHECK MY VOICE PATTERNS. GALLOWS, JAKE. PUNISHER.
SYSTEM MALFUNCTION. INTRUDER NOT RECOGNIZED!
WHAT THE H--? THERE ARE THREE BACK-UPS TO THAT SYSTEM!
THE CHANCES OF ALL THE SYSTEMS CRASHING ARE ABOUT A ZILLION TO ONE!
ABOUT THE SAME AS MY CHANCES OF GETTING OUT OF THIS ROOM... UNLESS...
...THIS LASER GRENADE DEALS WITH IT!
IDENTIFY AND NEUTRALIZE FIXED TARGET.
KA-THOOM!

WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW - LUCK'S BACK ON MY SIDE!
WHIRRRR!
HUH...? MY CELL DOOR'S OPENED!
ALL OUR DOORS HAVE OPENED!
THE PUNISHER MUST BE HAVING A SYSTEM FAILURE!
HE'LL BE HAVING A LIFE-FAILURE IN A MINUTE... WHEN WE VISIT HIM UP-STAIRS!
WAIT A MINUTE, JERK... YOU'RE FORGETTING HIS AUTO-DEFENSES...
...TAKE ONE STEP UP THE STAIRS AND WE'RE CHARBROILED!
AUTO-SYSTEM FAILURE!
UNBELIEVABLE, MAN! THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS!

BAD DAY FOR YOU, PUNISHER!
MY BOOT'S GONNA MALFUNCTION YOUR FACE!
GET READY TO DIE, PUNISHER!
NEXT ISSUE:
FATAL ATTRACTION!
BE HERE!